

AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON



A slice of life for David Naughton in a macabre mid-night massacre nightmare of sudden death.

WHEN the American Werewolf broke loose in London the fur flew! And the grue flowed.

And audiences are still screaming.

FM was invited to Universal Studios to John Landis' own preview of the picture, prior to its showing to the press.

John told the audience: "Now in order for this picture to work two things have got to happen: you've got to believe the actors—and I think they've done a great job—and you've got to be convinced you're seeing a man turn into a wolf-man—and I think Rick Baker has done a GREAT job." [Big round of applause from the audience at the mention of the name of the master monster maker.]

flight to fright

A few weeks later Your Editor was flown to New York to see the picture's first showing there and to interview 5 of the principals:

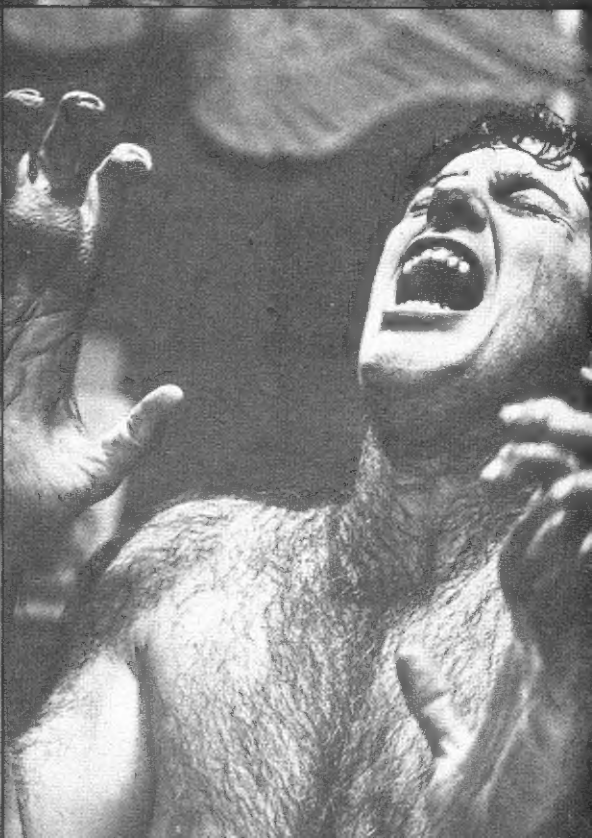
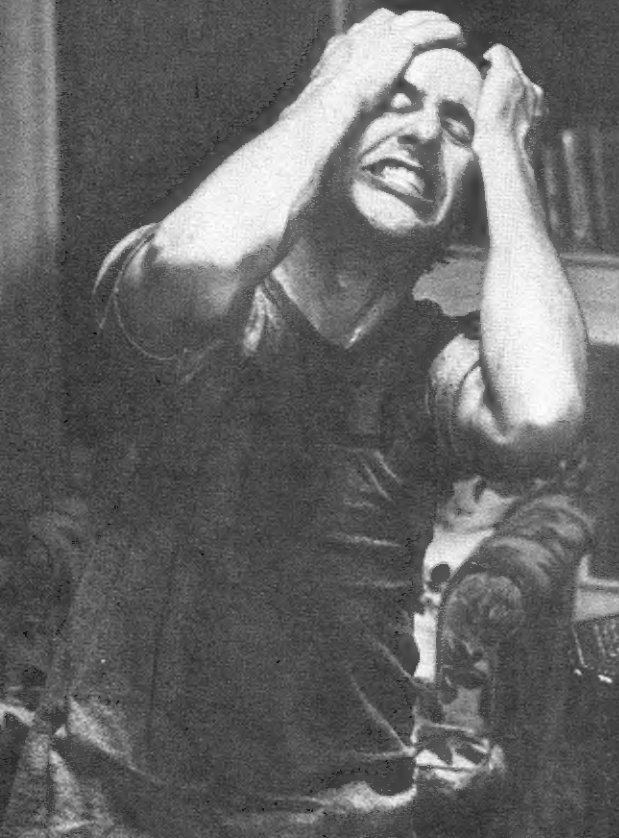
John Landis
Jenny Agutter
David Naughton
Rick Baker
and Griffin Dunne.

The NY preview proved a big hit and in the audience I noted Paul Mandell, an FM fan who's currently doing an in-depth book on MIGHTY JOE YOUNG.

In the hotel restaurant, the night before the showing, I noticed David (the werewolf) Naugh-



First there was Henry Hull, **THE WEREWOLF OF LONDON**; then Oliver Reed, who's suffered the **CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF**; now David Naughton is a wolf-man more ferocious than anything Charles Laughton faced on **THE ISLAND OF LOST SOULS**.





David Naughton undergoes lycanthropic contortions from head to toe as he grunts, groans, growls, grows before your very eyes, transforming from mild Dr. Pepper into a ferocious beast with a furry Hyde, ready to wolf down his favorite drink.

ton & his wife come in so I went over to their table with a copy of **FM** in my hands and laid it in front of David, saying, "You can't enjoy the picture without a program!" The issue was open to a page featuring a foto of David and he looked up startled, then laffed when I introduced myself as the editor. Forty-eight hours later I was in his room, interviewing him.

I asked him how strenuous it was doing the man-into-monster metamorphosis and again he laffed. "John Landis asked me if I thought I'd be physically up to it if I got the part. He warned me there might be 6 or 8 takes. That sounded like a picnic to me because I told him, 'On the Dr. Pepper commercials that I've been doing for the past 4 years sometimes we do as many as 40 takes!'"

I asked "Dr. Pepper & Mr. Hyde" if he thought there was any "danger" of being typecast (Karloff considered it a blessing but Lugosi seemed to feel it ruined his chances of ever playing straight dramatic roles). David said he doubted it altho he'd have no objection to doing an occasional horror role as it had been a lot of fun.

portrait of jenny

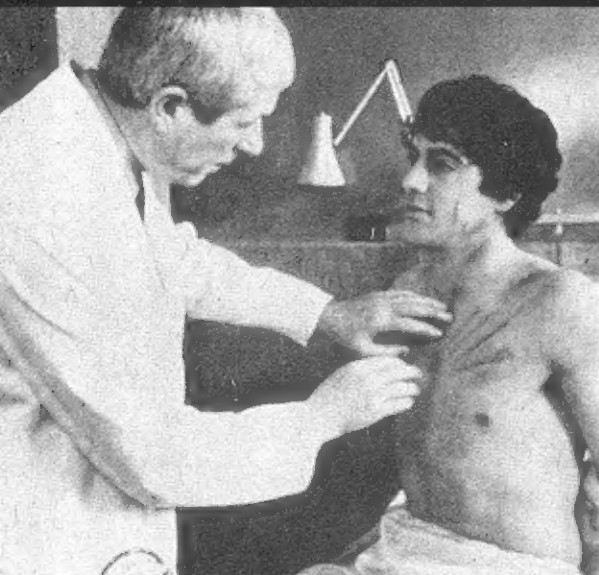
Jenny Agutter is a pleasant & outgoing young lady who's no stranger to sci-fi & fantasy films.



For David, too close of an encounter with his dead friend Jeff.



Betwixt & between, halfway to Hairy Horror.



The doctor is at a loss to understand the lacerations on his impatient patient's chest.

You'll remember her, of course, from *LOGAN'S RUN* and (if you're old enough to qualify for the rating) *EQUUS*. In the meantime she's made one of those films in the "gaslight" genre, where somebody's trying to drive somebody mad, only in this picture maybe it's a real ghost and maybe it's not. An airplane plays a prominent part in the picture. She also mentioned another completed film—I believe she said the title is *SECRET OF THE SANDS*—and I asked her if it was sci-fi because I seemed to remember that at home in my collection I had such a book but when I got back and looked I've been very frustrated to find no such title. I tried "Mystery of the Sands" but no luck.

Aha! It hit me just after I typed that title: it's "The Riddle of the Sands." Yes, a 1913 British book. I'm positive I have it in my library but it seems to be misfiled so I can't check on what the fantastic element is.

Jenny was coming down with a cold and had to give about a dozen interviews that day so I didn't want her to get a sore throat on my account and did most of the talking. She said she hadn't seen the werewolf till she saw it on the screen and she found it quite frightening. She's very beautiful & charming.

baker no faker

Before walking into Rick Baker's hotel room I had been handed several pages of information on him by the publicity chief on the junket and had read an assertion that the werewolf in the suit was *not*

a muppet . . .
an animated model (a la Harryhausen) . . .
a man in a wolf suit . . .
an alligator in a wolf suit . . .
a wolf in a wolf suit . . .
a cartoon . . .
... or a shaggy John Landis.

This left only *one* possible explanation.

I put it to Rick Baker plainly. "Then you weren't responsible at all for the creation of the werewolf? Your makeup artistry was demonstrated in all the phases of decomposition of Griffin Dunne? You Dunne in Griffin but the werewolf—he was *real*!"

"You've guessed the guilty secret," admitted Rick. "For the first time in the history of horror films a real werewolf was used." Or maybe he said "reel." Since he didn't put it in writing it was difficult to tell. Anyway, just to be on the safe side I slept with a spring of wolfbane under my pillow that night and a silver bullet on my bedstand. During the night I had a terrible nightmare & a horrible headache and I reached out sleepily and, without opening my eyes or turning on the light, grasped what I thought was an aspirin and swallowed it.

It did seem rather large & pointy.
Next morning the bullet was gone.
Coincidence or—the supernatural?

END